

## A Review Of "Questions On Doctrine."

### Question 10

**"Are not the spiritual content and evangelical emphasis of your 'Voice of Prophecy' radio program and 'Faith for Today' telecast a rather far cry from the doctrinal and legal core of Adventism? Are they not rather a bid for good will, and a subtle attempt to draw those who enroll in your proffered Bible courses to gradually accept the doctrinal and legal heart of Adventism? Is this doctrinal and legalistic emphasis a reflection of the counsels of Ellen G. White?"**

The book committee preface their answers to these questions by denying any and all attempts at being subtle or deceptive in any of their evangelistic activities. We wonder how many will agree.

The writer recalls many instances in the past, when an "evangelistic effort" was in progress, that the minister would instruct the people to not mention the fact that the meetings were sponsored by Seventh-day Adventists. We were told that we should not lie if asked the direct question, but that we should purposely refrain from advertising the fact that the meetings were Adventist sponsored. The public was purposely kept in the dark until a certain number of prospective "proselytes" were "on the hook," so to speak. Is not this one way of being subtle? Why does a people have to hide their identity from the public in this way? What have

they to fear? When any of the evangelical groups hold an "effort" or a "revival," they always identify themselves without fear or shame. Not only that, but no small amount of criticism has been leveled at the Adventists because of this policy. To the evangelical, at least, such a thing is both "subtle" and "deceptive."

To justify their course, they have invariably excused themselves by pointing out that prejudice would keep the people away from their meetings and so hamper "the work of God," or at least, their version of it.

The question might well be asked at this point, **"why are people so prejudiced against the Adventists and their particular message?"** To everything there is a reaction, good or bad, depending on the merits of the factors involved. Why have Adventists been in such bad odor with the general public, We feel that there is more to it than just the humanistic revolt against godliness.

Perhaps to some extent, at least, the answer lies in the legalistic charge. We are not unaware of the fact that the subject of Sabbath observance has been responsible for much of the anti-Adventist feeling and the charge of legalism. But, Adventists are not alone in this respect. The Seventh Day Baptists pioneered Sabbath reform in England about the time of the second phase of the Protes-



tant Reformation. The Adventists only "borrowed" that badge of shame, (if such it be) from their Seventh Day Baptist brethren. There are also other Sabbatarian groups which share the burden of being labeled "Judaizers" and "legalists."

Be that as it may, what of this charge of "legalism?" Are the Sabbatarian groups really legalistic because of their insistence upon Commandment keeping, which, of course, includes Sabbath-keeping?

It is stated in the book that **"Salvation is never earned; it is a gift from God through Jesus Christ. Otherwise, however sincere the effort may be, works frustrate the Grace of God (Gal. 2:21)."**

Ephesians 2:8 says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." On the other hand, the apostle James says, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

This subject of faith and works and their relationship to one another has always been a highly controversial subject.

However, it seems to be evident that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone can save us. Our good works, if any, then become the fruit of our faith. Interesting on this wise is a verse to be found in Romans 11: 32. **"For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all."**

This leaves absolutely no room for anyone to have that Pharisaical feeling of self righteousness. We are all concluded in unbelief that He might have mercy upon

**all. There is none that has the preeminence over another.**

Salvation is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.

However, we have no quarrel with anyone who chooses to live the godly life in Christ Jesus. To live a godly life is its own reward. There is no higher calling in this life. True godliness is love for God and our fellow men. Jesus, when asked which of the Commandments was the greatest, said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (See Matt. 22:37-39)

The professed Christian who has naught but a feeling of disgust and loathing for the sinner is not a true Christian. He is more like the self righteous Pharisees. Remember, Jesus was criticised for associating with publicans and sinners. His defense was that "the well have no need of a physician, but the sick."

We have no respect for the "whited sepulchres" who wear the outward garb of self righteousness, but are all rottenness within. I am not nearly so afraid of the man who knows he is a sinner and makes no pretenses about it. At least he is honest. There is no hypocrisy, fraud or sham in his life.

Getting back to the original grouping of questions, the question is asked if the spiritual content and evangelical emphasis of the "Voice of Prophecy" and "Faith for Today" are not a far cry from the doctrinal and legal



core of Adventism. Lets put it this way; this radio broadcast and the telecast are a "far cry" from the documented character of Adventism of a hundred years ago. A detailed study of the older books by James White, Ellen G. White, Joseph Bates, Uriah Smith, et al, will readily convince one of that, if the mind is not completely closed to the facts. But this is good. We heartily approve of the changes that are gradually taking place. Many of these changes have been advocated by The Gathering Call for many years. The thing we donot like to see is the double-dealing policy of denying that any changes have been made, or are being made, or that they are downgrading the "testimonies." Changes are long overdue, and to a certain extent we commend them in what has been accomplished. But, to "speak with a forked

tongue," as the early Indians used to express it, is inexcusable. This is being both subtle and deceitful.

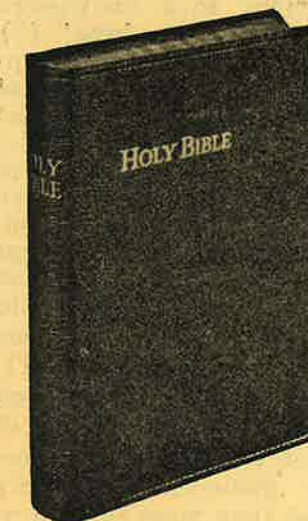
Of course the sole aim of the radio broadcast and the telecast is to "proselyte" members for their church. It would be ridiculous to contend otherwise. An Adventist would "compass sea and land to make one proselyte." It would be useless to deny that.

When it comes to fixing the blame for the "doctrinal and legalistic emphasis" of Adventism, as it is expressed by the evangelicals, Mrs. White cannot be excused. It is obvious that she had as much or more to do with it, than the rest of the pioneers of the movement. After all, it was she who placed the official stamp of approval on their teachings with the socalled "spirit of prophecy."

—by your Assistant Editor.

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